

## Abstracts

### Working Conditions of Freelancers from the Viewpoint of Multiple Jobs

**Shuhei Naka** (Meiji Gakuin University)

Freelancing is a way of working that is less constrained by organizations. For this reason, it is an employment style that makes it easier to hold down multiple jobs at the same time than employment at an organization. However, the impact of having a second job on the working conditions of freelancers has not been fully investigated. In this paper, we examine the effect of having a second job on the annual income of freelancers in terms of the level of time spent at a second job and the ratio of time spent at a second job to working hours. As a result of the analysis, we found the following three main points. First, an increase in the number of hours worked at a second job did not tend to increase annual personal income for either men and women. Second, annual income tended to decrease as the ratio of time spent at a second job increased. Third, even if the main job is a professional job, an increase in the ratio of time spent at a second job did not necessarily increase annual income. However, this effect differed by gender. For male professionals, the predicted annual income was higher in the group with the lowest ratio of hours of second jobs, and the predicted annual income tended to decrease gradually as the ratio of hours of second jobs increased. In contrast, for female professionals, the predicted annual income did not differ significantly depending on the ratio of hours of second jobs, while for non-professionals, the predicted annual income tended to decrease as the ratio of hours of second jobs increased.

### How Do Freelancers Cope with Work Intensification? Animators' Practices of Securing Sustainability in Freelance Work

**Shintaro Matsunaga** (Nagano University)

This paper reveals how freelancers try to control their labour in terms of their careers by investigating the case of animators in the Japanese animation industry. While previous research on freelance work has tended to emphasise low wages, temporal dimensions of freelance work have not been discussed in existing literature. Drawing on interviews with 24 animators, this paper analyzes how animators avoid work intensification and construct security in their work lives. The research results are threefold: first, while animators face the risk of work intensification due to short schedules, this can serve as a resource for justifying that they do not need to exert excessive effort. Second, animators pay attention to balancing relationships with clients or managers because close relationships between animators and clients can be a factor not only for job security but for work intensification as well. Third, some animators consider shifting their main job within the same occupation to adapt to the issues that arise due to their life stages. These practices are possible because animators as an occupation include multiple jobs. This paper suggests the significance of describing the diversity in skill formation and career structures within freelance work.

### JTUC-RENGO's Freelance Support Initiatives

**Hajime Urushihara** (Japanese Trade Union Confederation (JTUC-RENGO))

We, JTUC-RENGO, call for a review and expansion of the criteria for determining worker status in order to protect workers who work under outsourcing contracts (freelancers). Furthermore, it is necessary to develop legislation that clarifies contract rules, such as contract terms and conditions and appropriate remuneration. We have compiled these ideas into the "Initiatives Policy of JTUC-RENGO" in 2020. In order to promote our initiatives, we first conducted several surveys on issues facing freelancers, and then organized the results by industry and occupation for further research. After multiple surveys and consideration, we set up the Wor-Q Bureau within our administrative office in 2023 to support freelancers. The Wor-Q Bureau provides consultation to freelancers, provides a forum for their solidarity, and offers a simple insurance scheme. Additionally, we have established an association (Association of Special Insurance Coverage) for freelancers to join the government's workers' compensation insurance specifically to compensate for work-related injuries. This Association does not merely handle the process of insuring freelancers, but also provides education for them on how to prevent work-related accidents from occurring and assists

them in filing claims for compensation for work-related accidents. Freelancers are also our “colleagues” in the workplace. JTUC-RENGO seeks to realize a society where even freelancers can work safely and securely under fair working conditions and environments. We will continue to work toward strengthening and enhancing the safety net for all workers, including revising the criteria for determining worker status for freelancers who seek legal protection.

#### Freedom and Protection for Freelancers

**Shimpei Ishida** (Senshu University)

Recently, there has been a significant increase in freelancers who, while contracting as business operators without being subject to the direction or supervision of the contracting party, work individually without employing others. Although these freelancers could legally qualify as workers under labor laws, such as the Labor Standards Act and the Labor Contract Act, their classification as business owners effectively excludes them from the protections provided by labor laws. This situation has given rise to the critical issue of “disguised freelancers.” Moreover, even when freelancers do not qualify as workers under labor laws, they differ from genuine business operators in that they work individually and without employees, highlighting the need for tailored protective regulations. This paper examines (1) the issue of disguised freelancers and (2) the protection of genuine freelancers. Regarding (1), it argues for strengthening penalties against disguised freelancers and considering a national certification system utilizing AI technology. For (2), it points out that Specified Persons Engaged in Entrusted Business may be recognized as workers under the Labor Union Act in certain cases. Furthermore, it argues that the nature of freelancers working individually without employing others should be seen not as extracting value from capital but rather as generating value through labor. This perspective suggests a new concept of worker that is distinct from those defined under the Labor Standards Act and the Labor Union Act.

#### The Expansion of Elderly Employees’ Roles and Its Logic: Case Study of Retired Sales Workers at Manufacturing Company in Japan

**Akihiko Kujime** (Kirin Holdings Co., Ltd)

As the percentage of elderly employees in a company increases, there is a possibility that they will be assigned tasks beyond the scope assumed by the system at the workplace level. It is important to clarify both the system prescribed by the human resources department and the actual utilization of elderly employees at the workplace level to understand how the job scope of elderly employees, thought to be expanding at the workplace level, has expanded, and to design an evaluation system and wage system suitable for the active utilization of elderly employees. The results of the survey conducted at Company K revealed the following regarding the expansion of the job scope of elderly employees. Elderly employees are entrusted with a wide range of tasks, such as developing new customer segments to assist leaders in developing strategies. On the other hand, they are not entrusted with the work required of leaders at the section leader level and above. It became clear that Company K has developed its evaluation system and wage system in a way that reflects the reality of expanding work areas at the workplace level at the discretion of field leaders and elderly employees. This study presents the human resource management required for the active utilization of elderly employees.

#### Evolving Employment Strategies and Wage Systems for Elderly Employees: Insights into Base Salary Determination

**Miho Fujinami** (Chiba Keizai University)

**Haruyuki Kanou** (Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities and Job Seekers)

This study examines the relationship between employment strategies and wage systems (particularly base salary) for elderly employees (workers in their early 60s who are continuously employed) using data from two surveys conducted in 2011 and 2021. The 2012 amendment to the Act on Stabilization of Employment of Elderly Persons required companies to ensure employment for all workers up to the age of 65. However, many

companies were initially reluctant to actively utilize elderly employees. In contrast, the 2020 amendment, which obligated companies to make efforts to secure employment until the age of 70, along with worsening labor shortages, has led more companies to actively utilize elderly employees. This study also draws on prior research on the integration of part-time workers to explore the challenges of employment strategies and wage systems for elderly employees. The results classify employment strategies into “quantitative utilization” (increased employment rates for elderly employees) and “qualitative utilization” (changes in work arrangements and roles). While quantitative utilization has progressed significantly, qualitative utilization has lagged. Companies emphasizing qualitative utilization tend to offer elderly employees treatment similar to regular employees, while those focusing only on quantitative utilization provide more limited rewards. The findings highlight the importance of establishing flexible wage and job grading systems to support qualitative utilization. Future research should investigate how diverse work styles among elderly employees can be supported by tailored wage management systems.

#### Labor Unions as Social Capital: Encounters and Volunteering

**Akie Nakamura** (JTUC Research Institute for Advancement of Living Standards)

The understanding of labor unions has been gradually lost. Labor unions are viewed as economic and political actors; however, unions rooted in mutual aid and solidarity are inherently social entities. Despite updates to discussions on employment systems, explanations of labor unions remain outdated. This study examines the functions of labor unions through social capital theory. Enterprise unions exemplify “bonding” social capital. To expand understanding of labor unions, this research focuses on their role as “bridging” social capital, analyzing how unions contribute to the formation of individual networks horizontally and vertically through private encounters and participation in social contribution activities. These results confirm that unions function as bridging social capital. Especially, this reveals that the bond among unions plays a pivotal role when unions act as bridging social capital. This finding offers practical implications for unions, which have been called upon to shift from an inward-facing stance to a more outward-facing stance. By forming boundaries with multiple unions beyond their own, unions can simultaneously open their members to external networks while maintaining cohesion within. Although social capital has been extensively studied, research on Japanese labor unions is scarce. This study opens up new avenues for union research.